

# THE PLAINS COMMUNITY LEAGUE

ANNUAL REPORT 2024





## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

ERICA YOUNG, DIRECTOR  
*The Plains Community League*

### Hello from The John Page Turner Community House!

We've finished our second wonderful summer camp session and are now continuing our educational efforts with our long-standing Tutoring program. We are keeping our community fed with Thanksgiving Dinners to supplement the staples provided by Peas & Grace and other local food pantries. When the holidays roll around, we'll invite you to join us at the Community House for a festive time. Last year, dozens of children unwrapped gifts, the beautiful draft horses of the Shenandoah Carriage Company gave wagon rides around town, and picture opportunities with Santa gave everyone a chance to capture the memories. I will offer a Parent's Day Out again, with kids enjoying a few hours doing crafts, watching holiday movies, and eating yummy snacks while parents get the shopping or wrapping done (or maybe sneak in a nap!)

I'm planning for next summer already, with repairs to the Community House high on the work list. It's hard on an old building when hundreds of people come and go each year! The Jessie and Rose Loeb Memorial Foundation has granted TPCL \$20,000 to replace the old, leaky, creaky windows. Even with this generous grant, we'll need a bit more than that, as the repair list grows each season we occupy the House.

I enjoy working with the generous businesses and individuals in The Plains to ensure that there are funds to support these important programs. It is truly the gifts from individuals that make the biggest difference. It is amazing how much we can do with even the smallest of donations. Won't you please consider sending us something so that you and your neighbors, big and small, children and adults, can continue to enjoy the special times TPCL creates here in our beloved town? I look forward to hearing from you!

Happy Holidays!

## PEEK INTO THE PLAINS' PAST

Did you know a Rebel soldier and a Yankee spy share a grave in The Plains? In the early 1930s, Virginia state highway contractors began connecting Main Street to the current Route 55. While excavating and grading the road on the outskirts of town, the contractors uncovered two bodies. One was a soldier buried in a Confederate uniform and the other a man in his underwear. A cursory examination of the second skeleton showed a broken neck, suggesting he may have been hanged. Speculation was that the man with the broken neck had been a Union spy who had killed the Confederate to get his uniform. When the spy was caught, they stripped him of the uniform and hung him for treason. The dead Confederate soldier was dressed in his uniform and the two were buried together. After the contractors discovered the bodies, they were reburied off the right-of-way with permission of the landowner. John Gott, a Fauquier County historian, arranged to have a plaque installed at the gravesite in the 1960s. A bureaucrat in Richmond included wording that the two men died in a field hospital nearby, but no such hospital existed in records.

After completing research, John Gott had a display erected at the intersection of Main Street and Fauquier Avenue that explains what happened. "On August 28th, 1862, a Federal spy named Jack Sterry was caught by Confederate Gen. John Hood and judged a "Jessie Scout,"

named for Jessie Fremont, wife of Union Gen. John Fremont, who suggested that Federal spies avoid detection by dressing in Confederate uniforms. Sterry was discovered when the soldier from whom he stole the uniform was found nearby, mortally wounded. The dying soldier identified his assailant, and the swift sentence was determined by a drum-head court."



Historical display at Fauquier Avenue and Main Street



Grave marker next to Rt. 55 southeast of town center, righthand side of road

If you are interested in learning more about Fauquier County history, visit the [www.gottlibrary.org](http://www.gottlibrary.org) Fauquier Heritage and Preservation Foundation in Marshall, VA.







## SPREADING OUR WINGS at SUMMER CAMP

Maybe you saw our Campers in town this summer. They were out on walking field trips, playing sports on the lawn and in the Town Park, and climbing on or off the buses on their way to and from Middleburg for swimming. It's a special treat to see the town's kids enjoying themselves with summer activities, made possible by the generous support of our neighbors, local businesses and foundations. Thank you all for your support!

This is the second year of our Camp program and we are so pleased with the impact TPCL is able to make within the community of The Plains. Without this free summer camp, most of these children would have had nowhere to go and nothing to do but watch television or sleep. But Summer Camp means the children have a safe, air-conditioned Community House with space to relax, read, play games, do arts and crafts, and other activities, all of them planned and supervised. And the Campers are assured a daily lunch and snack to fuel all this, something many families can't take for granted when school is out.

In total, 73 people directly participated in Camp: staff, campers, volunteers who provided walking field trips, snacks, lunches, errands, books, classes, equipment, crafts, and many other needed donations. The activities were varied and intended to help these children spread their wings – it was a pleasure to watch them grow!

We think it was a perfect summer for everyone, but don't take our word for it! Here is what some of our Counselors and Counselors-in-Training (CITS) say about it:

The Counselors say, "Our program is to help families in need. Some of their children would have to stay home by themselves and this gives them a place to come and to feel safe... their parents trust us enough to do that... We're able to do fun activities with them, offer them free lunch, we're able to take them to the pool."

And the CITS say, "Yeah, I'm a counselor-in-training so I have to watch how they (the Counselors) work first and next year, too, unless they think I was good

---

**"We get to make them feel like we're all family here."**

---

enough I can be an actual counselor. (We) call it counselor-in-training instead of saying volunteer counselor (because) we are watching and also helping."

An innovation this year is the Camp Store where Campers can exchange tokens for toys and other items. CITS say, "The store where they earn money (tokens) during the week. Yeah, I think that's a plus because then they like actually doing chores... they wanna do more stuff so they can earn their money. My brother, he's never worked this much. It's teaching them how to save because in the real world you can't just (buy things). It depends how much they do, how much they don't. People don't do anything at all and they don't get anything - you understand the normal balance."



Patriotic Campers in their "Spreading Our Wings" t-shirts



Writing to veterans through Hero's Bridge gets you a cool temporary tattoo



Building friendships in The Plains park



Stuart Street Atelier field trip





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## HOLIDAYS

When November rolls around, TPCL embraces the holiday spirit. Thanksgiving packages are provided to families in need – 44 received dinners in 2023 and we'll be doing this again in a few days.

In December, the John Page Turner Community House was festively decorated and we welcomed Santa and Mrs. Claus for a visit with anyone who wanted to say "Hello." Santa gave out over 50 wrapped presents to the town's children and The Shenandoah Carriage Company gave free carriage rides along Main Street and past the train depot.



Two of our tutoring students stopped in to visit the Easter Bunny.

Every Christmas Eve, volunteers place luminaries all along the streets of The Plains to light up the way for travelers.

On Valentine's Day, TPCL hosted a tea where our neighbors could socialize and partake of delicious food. There was a leprechaun hunt through town on St. Patrick's Day, an egg hunt and visit from the Easter Bunny in April, and a scarecrow contest in October.



Gomer Pyles, our Christmas photographer, catches a self portrait with Santa



Preparing luminaries for Christmas Eve

## SPRING BREAK CAMP

TPCL provided parents with coverage for difficult-to-find child care during the week of spring break. Our mini camp provided a safe, fun place at the Community House with arts, crafts, sports, and more.



Watercolor painting at Spring Break Camp

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Ready to enroll in a tech school or to get your Bachelor's degree? Our scholarship program is going strong, with ten recipients this past spring. We encourage anyone in Zip Code 20198 who is pursuing education after high school to apply for a scholarship. These can be for community college, university, trade school or an apprenticeship and are applied to tuition, books or board.



Scholarship winner with family and Erica





**A DAY IN  
THE PLAINS  
BRINGING THE  
COMMUNITY TOGETHER**

Our October festival was a fun time for all. With live music, carriage rides, ice cream and hot dogs, and even a balloon artist, this was a chance for families and neighbors to gather to enjoy some lovely fall weather and time together.



Face painting and balloon art



Canine companions for the carriage rides



Satisfied balloon bearers



The Community House decked out for A Day in The Plains



**TUTORING  
HELPING STUDENTS  
SPREAD THEIR WINGS**

At 3:15 high schoolers begin spilling into the Community House. The students greet Director Erica Young with hugs and quick updates on how their day went. They sit at their table, pull out their schoolwork, and compare notes as they wait for retired Fauquier County math teacher, Laura Nix-Berg, to arrive and provide support.

A little later, elementary and middle school students arrive on the bus from Marshall and Coleman. Thompson students are driven by their parents as we are not on their bus route. They all grab snacks and drinks from the kitchen and head to their tutoring rooms to chat and relax before pulling out their homework. As the high schoolers finish their work, they morph from student to tutor to help the younger students.

The tutoring program has over 30 students ranging from kindergarten to high school seniors attending on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the school year. The youngest students work on early literacy skills, the elementary and middle school students receive help completing



Studying hard



Veteran tutors ready to hit the books

homework and reinforcing academic concepts taught in school.

In addition to the high schoolers, our tutors are retired teachers, business owners, homemakers, and young adults. Some have tutored for over a decade while others have just begun. They tutor because they want to support our community and because they enjoy working with children and teens.

Are you good at math or science? Do you want to share a love of reading? We always need more tutors and we would love to have you join our team. We have instructional materials to get you started and fellow tutors to help. We'll even provide the necessary background check. Come by and visit our tutoring program on Tuesday or Thursday, or give Erica a call to learn more about it.



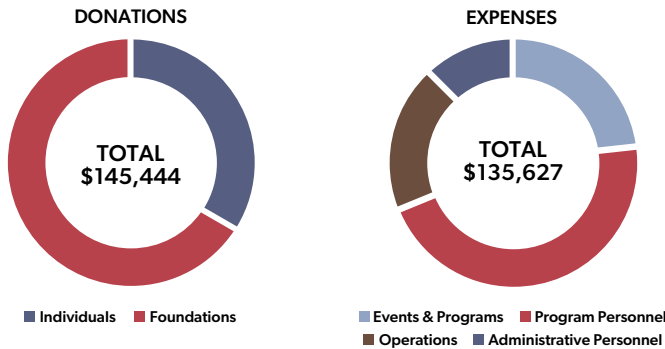


# THE PLAINS COMMUNITY LEAGUE FINANCIALS

FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024

Through the generosity of individuals and foundations during the past year, The Plains Community League was able to offer The Plains community all of our planned programs including our newest addition, the free summer camp. While the camp has proven to be a huge success, it is a major financial commitment to provide the entire experience free of charge to our workforce families. In-kind donations and volunteer help make things possible, keeping program costs relatively low. But the most important part of our programs requires donations to cover not only operating costs and house repairs, but also salary for an executive director and camp counselors. Erica, our director, is the heart and soul of the John Page Turner Community House and is worth every penny we pay her. She is maintaining TPCL flagship programs and increasing our reach to more members of our community. Erica makes all the difference, and we hope you think so too, and will consider a generous donation to help us remain impactful in The Plains.

TPCL kept the goal of spending no more than we collected in donations and grants last year. We were on track with our budget from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. The donations and expenses are shown below. Many thanks for your support to make all this possible.



## A SPECIAL NOTE OF APPRECIATION TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND FOUNDATIONS THAT HAVE DONATED IN THE PAST FISCAL YEAR:

**Donations and Grants \$500 to \$999**

Adams Custom Services, Inc  
 Julia Coles  
 Nina Fout  
 Larkspur Services, Inc.  
 Charles G. Mackall  
 Marshall United Methodist Church  
 Amy Thomas  
 James Treptow  
 Nicole Watson  
 Lynn Wiley

**Donations and Grants \$1,000 to \$9,999**

John Adams  
 Ann Mudge Backer  
 The William M. Backer Foundation  
 Michael Crane  
 William Carey Crane  
 Andrea Currier  
 Earl Douple  
 George and Rita Fenwick  
 Blakeney and Catherine Gallagher  
 The Graham Family Foundation  
 Roberta Jeffries  
 Robert E. McConnell Foundation

*Donations and Grants \$1,000 to \$9,999, cont'd.*

Anna McWane Charitable Foundation  
 PRACEP  
 Mark & Nicole Siess  
 Craig William Voss Memorial Fund

**Donations and Grants \$10,000 and up**

Hillsdale Fund Inc.  
 Jacqueline B. Mars  
 Path Foundation  
 Vanguard Charitable  
 Wise Foundation

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

At The Plains Community League, our mission is simple yet powerful: to enhance the lives of individuals and families in The Plains by providing opportunities for education, connection, joy, and care. You can join us in helping neighbors help neighbors.

**Donate:** Help us continue our vital work such as our Free Summer Camp, Thanksgiving meals, and Tutoring.

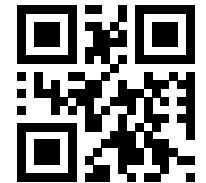
**Volunteer:** We are especially looking for Tutors this school year, and we will be assembling Thanksgiving meals on November 24th starting at 1:00 pm if you'd care to join us at the Community House.

**Stay Informed:** We're happy to add you to our email list to keep you updated on activities and volunteer opportunities, just return the donation form with or without a donation.

*TPCL would like to send you a gift just for being our neighbor. Return the donation slip with or without a donation or donate via PayPal or Credit Card and we will send you two stickers. One is a static cling vinyl circle appropriate for application on the inside of a car window and the other is a vinyl sticker with adhesive for indoor or outdoor use. Show your pride in our community while helping neighbors help neighbors!*



To donate by PayPal or Credit Card, please go to our website at [www.tpclva.org](http://www.tpclva.org) and click the donate button. Or scan the QR code to donate via PayPal. TAX ID# 52-1231763



*The Plains Community League is a publicly supported 501(C)3 non-profit tax-exempt organization. No goods or services are provided in exchange for this donation.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- I cannot donate at this time, but please send me the stickers so I can show my pride in The Plains.
- Do not add me to your email communication list.

**YES!**  
I'D LIKE TO DONATE TODAY





Ruby, Counselor-in-Training, models a  
The Plains Volunteer Fire Company Helmet




**THE PLAINS  
COMMUNITY LEAGUE**

P.O. Box 432  
6473 Main Street  
The Plains, VA 20198

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Nono Fisher, Acting President  
Ellen Richmond-Hearty, Secretary  
Rick Miller, Treasurer  
Robin Melton  
Lori Sisson  
Molly Kelley  
Jane Goode  
Victoria Christian  
Erica Young, Director

**CONTACT US** 

Visit our website at [tpclva.org](http://tpclva.org) to learn more about our organization  
and find out how you can get involved.

Call us at **540.253.2119** for any inquiries or to discuss volunteer opportunities.

Email us at [PCL20198@gmail.com](mailto:PCL20198@gmail.com) if you have any questions or  
would like more information. TAX ID# 52-1231763

---

*The Plains Community League is a publicly supported  
501(C)3 non-profit tax-exempt organization.*